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WHY HARRISON WAS ELECTED!

THE State of New York has of late years been the battleground of political parties in the United States as certainly as Belgium was formerly regarded as "the cock-pit of Europe." The old campaign cry, "as goes Pennsylvania, so goes the Union," has lost its significance. The Empire State has become the arbiter, and success there has been the determining factor in the last three Presidential elections. For a variety of reasons, few or none of them consonant with the best form of Republican government, the Democratic party has, since 1876, confidently counted upon the support of all those States wherein slavery was but recently tolerated by law. Of the one hundred and fifty-five electoral votes cast for General Hancock in 1880, one hundred and thirty-eight came from the sixteen States which compose "the solid South,"—New Jersey with nine, Nevada with three, and California with five of her six electoral votes contributing the remaining seventeen. Of the two hundred and nineteen votes cast by electors for Mr. Cleveland in 1884, the South gave one hundred and fifty-three. If the Democrats had carried New York in 1880 General Hancock (the first candidate since President Monroe to receive the vote of every Southern State) would have been elected. If the narrow margin of less than one vote in a thousand by which the Republicans were defeated in New York in 1884 had been reversed, Mr. Cleveland would not have been inaugurated.

Nor would Mr. Lincoln have been chosen in 1860 if the thirty-five votes of New York had been given to one of the opposing candidates. We are accustomed to regard the first election of General Grant, in 1868, as an overwhelming Republican victory, but General Grant carried eight Southern States. Alabama, Arkansas, and Florida, the two Carolinas, Tennessee, Missouri

and West Virginia gave majorities in his favor. Governor Seymour received the votes of Delaware and Maryland, Kentucky, Georgia and Louisiana, while Virginia, Mississippi and Texas were not reconstructed, and did not therefore participate in the election. In the College of Electors General Grant received two hundred and fourteen votes, Governor Seymour eighty, but if the total Southern vote could have been cast in the latter's favor he would have defeated General Grant by seven electoral votes. The famous election of 1876 in which South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana contributed toward the slender majority of one electoral vote by which Mr. Hayes was elected President, after he had lost New York, is fresh in the remembrance of all.

In the elections of 1884 and of 1888, conducted under the census taken in 1880, the Electoral College is composed of four hundred and one members. In order to obtain the two hundred and one votes essential to an election, the Democratic party reckons with certainty upon the one hundred and fifty-three votes of the sixteen Southern States. The Republican party reckons with a certainty more honorably justifiable upon the support of eighteen Northern States, which cast one hundred and eighty-two votes. New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Indiana, which muster sixty-six electoral votes, are the prizes to be fought for—the doubtful States to be contested. Provided that these lines can be maintained as they have been in both elections (unless figures not now attainable should show that the Republicans have this year carried West Virginia), it is evident that the State of New York is absolutely essential to Democratic success. By no warrantable calculation can the needed forty-eight electoral votes be obtained without her aid.

Of the remaining doubtful States New Jersey is ordinarily Democratic. In the election of 1860 her vote was divided between Lincoln and Douglas, four of her electors voting for the former, three for the latter candidate. In every subsequent Presidential election, save that of 1872, when Mr. Greeley was the Democratic nominee, the Republicans have lost the State. The defeat of General Harrison and the cause which he represents was, therefore, not unlooked for by either party in New Jersey. In the seven national elections preceding that of the current year, Connecticut and Indiana have given Republican majorities, save in 1876 and 1884, and New York, while going Republican in four

out of the seven, sustained Seymour in 1868, Tilden in 1876 and Cleveland in 1884. As in 1880 and 1884, so in 1888, the Democratic managers foresaw that, with New Jersey carried to the Democratic column where the State naturally belongs, victory in New York, supplemented by triumph in either Indiana or Connecticut, meant victory in the Nation.

The Democratic party had, after the elections of 1887, every reason to hope that it could in the succeeding year carry every State in which it had been successful in 1884. Insidious enemies in the four doubtful States were hard at work to disintegrate the Republicans. The Prohibition party, which in 1884 threw 25,000 votes in New York, had in 1885 thrown more than 30,000 ; in 1886, over 36,000, and in 1887, about 42,000 votes. In New Jersey a Prohibition vote of but little more than 6,000 in the Presidential contest of 1884 had in the Gubernatorial election of 1886 increased more than threefold. In Connecticut a poll of 2,126 in 1884 had two years later risen to 4,699, while in Indiana the third party mustered more than 9,000 on the election day of 1886, as against 3,028 two years before. At the same, in every State except Indiana, the Republican vote had, since 1884, shrunk in a ratio far greater than the Democratic. The table showing the percentage of votes cast by the several parties at the election of 1884, and at subsequent elections up to 1888, clearly exhibits this, as it does the increase in the Prohibition vote, so justly alarming to the Republican party.

	Democrats.	Republicans	Prohibition-ists.	Labor or Greenback Party.	Scattering.
New York... { 1884.	48.27	48.15	2.07	1.45	0.06
{ 1885.	48.86	47.77	3.00	0.20	0.17
{ 1886.	48.29	47.48	3.75	0.28	0.20
{ 1887.	44.94	43.31	4.00	6.71	1.04
New Jersey { 1884.	48.98	47.32	2.96	1.34	
{ 1886.	47.45	44.00	8.55		
Connecticut. { 1884.	49.32	48.12	1.54	1.02	
{ 1886.	47.72	46.18	3.80	2.30	
Indiana..... { 1884.	49.49	48.18	0.61	1.72	
{ 1886.	48.21	48.89	1.93	0.97	

On the other hand, the Democratic party had no reason for serious uneasiness on account of the marked increase of the Labor vote in New York, which had suddenly risen from two thousand

eight hundred in 1886 to seventy thousand in 1887, for while, owing to this cause, their own vote had shrunk three and one-third per cent., that of the Republicans had decreased four per cent., as compared with the preceding year, thus indicating that the Labor party drew rather more heavily from the Republicans than from the Democrats.

Third parties, such as are made up of Labor, Prohibition or Paper Money advocates, flourish where no deep and broad issue divides the two leading contestants for popular favor. Where a great principle, understood of all men, is at stake, where a clearly defined principle or measure is maintained on the one side and denied on the other, voters ordinarily join one of the great political divisions, as inclination or conviction may determine. The exception to this rule seems to be where one party courts self-destruction by shattering its own organization. Thus the overwhelming defeat of Mr. Greeley in 1872 was undoubtedly caused in large part by the deep disgust of thousands of Democrats, who abstained from voting rather than sustain one of their most ancient and bitter political enemies.

If this be a rule applicable to political action, it is evident that the Prohibition vote in the four doubtful States, drawn in a large measure from the Republicans, could only be expected to increase, or, indeed, to hold its own, upon the condition that no issue was presented of importance sufficient to induce a return of the wandering sheep to the Republican fold. The party in opposition could not frame an issue of that decisive character. It could be done only by the party in power. To do nothing, to "let well enough alone," to pursue the proverbial and often wise policy of masterly inactivity, is within the province of an administration.

True, it may be asserted that Mr. Cleveland's conduct of the National Government was open to the attack of the opposition at many points. His administration has been successful in few things, scarcely creditable in some things, commonplace in many things. Its foreign policy has not been firm, courteous, or dignified. The chief part played by the Secretary of the Navy has been in a quarrel which resulted in the ruin of one of the great ship-builders of the country by an official interpretation of a government contract so arbitrary and unfair that in a private transaction it would have seriously affected the character of the man

who insisted upon it. The Secretary of the Interior and his Land Commissioner radically differed over matters of grave importance, while the Post-Office Department is justly blamed in many parts of the country for mal-administration and for seriously crippling the public service by hasty removals of competent officials to make room for political favorites, ignorant of their duties, and, in many instances, unfitted by temperament or education even to acquire a knowledge of them.

The Secretary of the Treasury, unable or unwilling to grapple with the problem of too large a revenue, has rendered himself unpopular with the masses by depositing the money of the government in banks selected capriciously or for political reasons—a course of action sententiously condemned by President Cleveland himself in his third annual message, when he said that “No condition ought to exist which would justify the grant of power to a single official, upon his judgment of its necessity, to withhold from or release to the business of the people, in an unusual manner, money held in the treasury, and thus affect, at his will, the financial situation of the country.”

Dakota, with an area of nearly one hundred and fifty thousand square miles and a population of seven hundred thousand people, easily and naturally divisible, as its inhabitants request, into two states, the smallest of which is considerably larger than Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland combined, has up to the present time been denied division or admission by the Democratic House of Representatives, in a manner so arbitrary and so unjustifiable as to involuntarily recall the course of the same party with reference to the admission of Kansas.

The herald, who, on Mr. Cleveland's advent, stood “tiptoe on the misty mountain-top,” joyously proclaiming the dawn of the bright day of civil service reform, has found himself a discredited “Wiggins,” and that ideal title to office, whose muniments are personal fitness and work well done, has not been viewed as absolutely unimpeachable by the Democratic tribunals which passed upon it. It is even suspected that competitive examination is not a bulwark impregnable to the assaults of those who desire to bestow office as political reward, and the president of the civil service reform league, who annually comes to the shores of the deep sounding sea to applaud and to praise, has remained to apologize and to defend.

Veterans of the war, relying upon lavish promises issued even in writing before election, as to pension legislation, have been grievously disappointed by failure to meet obligations at maturity. Of the one thousand and more pension bills of a private character submitted for executive approval to Presidents Hayes and Arthur not one was vetoed, while the interposition of a prerogative, stretched perhaps beyond its constitutional limit, killed four hundred and sixteen out of one thousand and eighty-four enactments of this character, passed by Congress during the first three and one-half years of President Cleveland's term.

Yet it may well be questioned whether attack at any or at all of these critical points would have produced great impression upon the mass of voters in doubtful States. The country at large cares little for foreign affairs, so long as we are not at war, and little for a navy or a Navy Department, so long as we are at peace. Discussion of financial affairs is ordinarily dreary and uninteresting to political gatherings, while the voters of the older States can, with that equanimity with which we endure the misfortunes of others, bear the disfranchisement of their brethren in Dakota. The vast majority of our citizens still view the honest and competent conduct of the business of the government with more concern than they do the exact method by which fit and competent persons shall be appointed to office, and are generously ready to forgive a party new to power for many errors and mistakes.

The one absorbing predominant issue which assured General Harrison's election was supplied by his opponent. From the standpoint of the politician the President's Message of December, 1887, is inexplicable; nor can the motive be more readily explained from the statesman's point of view. The President knew that he would be renominated and believed that he would be re-elected. Silence on the tariff, an ordinary report "on the state of the Union," a recommendation that Congress should consider the question of the surplus revenue, would probably have secured him a second term. But a policy so safe and so peaceful was apparently not pleasing to the President, and he unwisely launched upon a crusade against Protection when it was morally certain that a Republican Senate would baffle, defeat, and humiliate him. The Press, as quickly as Congress, seized the advantage, and, before a week had gone by, the President found retreat impossible

and was forced to maintain a position sharply defined by his antagonists, who immediately became the aggressors.

The composition of the Committee of Ways and Means, upon which the duty devolved of framing the bill in accordance with the recommendations of the President, was singularly unfortunate. Of the eight Democratic members, six represented districts in Southern States where manufacturing interests are so slight in importance that the annual wage-roll of the combined six is not one-third as large as that of a single large manufacturing establishment in the North. Neither employers nor employed could view with indifference the hasty manner in which modification of a protective tariff, upon which depended their fortunes and their daily earnings, was made by men fitted neither by association nor experience for the task. It was not until the first day of March, nearly three months after the President's message was received, that the minority was informed as to what had been done by the majority, and it was not until the second day of April that the bill was reported to the Committee of the Whole.

Before the passage of the Mills Bill in the House, on the twenty-first day of July, the National conventions of both parties assembled. The Democratic Convention unanimously nominated Mr. Cleveland and joined with him upon the ticket Judge Thurman. While the nomination of Mr. Cleveland was inevitable, the choice of Judge Thurman cannot be regarded as wise or prudent. It aroused no local pride which could give his party additional strength, for in a contest over a protective tariff and "free wool" Ohio is as surely Republican as Vermont. Nor was Judge Thurman able to aid his party in the canvass. The attempt which was made to carry a man not in robust health and of advanced years over long and fatiguing distances only resulted in breaking down the patient victim, and arousing public sympathy in lieu of public enthusiasm. Nor was the argument which Judge Thurman advanced in support of the chief issue of the campaign worthy of the high opinion which the public had formed of his power while he was a member of the Senate. Apparently he viewed the country as confronted, not with a condition, but with a theory, for the constant refrain of his public utterance was the long-since exploded dogma of the *doctrinaire* that a tariff is always a tax, enhancing by the amount of the duty the price of each article to the consumer.

The Republican convention which met at Chicago was somewhat longer in reaching a conclusion, but its choice of candidates, made with the greatest harmony, was more fortunate. To select representative men from the two great doubtful States, New York and Indiana, was wise politically, and the men selected were wise. The public utterances of General Harrison, succeeding his nomination, commanded the hearty approval of his party and the respect and admiration of the entire country ; while Mr. Morton's wide acquaintance and long and honorable career in business in New York brought strength and popularity to the ticket in that State. A weak and puerile attempt which was made to deride General Harrison as the descendant of illustrious men reacted upon its abettors. General Harrison's reputation at the bar, his meritorious service in the field, his admirable record in the Senate, served as an answer of triple strength, while his discreet bearing during the canvass, with his apt and eloquent speeches, added fresh renown to a name brilliantly interwoven for three generations with the history of the country.

In that effective organization of political forces, without which party success is impossible, the Republicans had undoubtedly the advantage. The roseate imagination of one of the Democratic managers has supplied our political slang with the suggestive epithet of "rainbow chaser," while the jovial propensity of their National Committee for converting sharp disaster into unlooked-for benefit, recalls the bulletin of the physician who, in oft repeated phrase, announced that the condition of his patient had all long exceeded his most sanguine expectations, tersely concluding, "he is dead." As against the Democratic "game of bluff," the Chairman of the Republican National Committee and his associates indulged in no counter-boasting, but quietly kept at their arduous task until they were able to announce, with the acquiescence of their opponents, that the Republican candidates had been elected. Perhaps no National Committee ever before did so much work, or did it so effectively as did that whose movements were directed by Senator Quay.

Still, with prestige of candidates and ability of management in their favor, the Republicans would have found almost insuperable difficulty in dislodging the administration from power but for the aid of the one great, clear, dominating issue of the Protective Tariff. Throughout the country that question was

brought forward to the subordination, if not to the exclusion, of all others—protection not to capitalist or manufacturer, but protection to those who toil at wheel and spindle, at forge and furnace, at the anvil and the plough, protection to all those who depend on a good day's wages for a good day's work. Strive as they might Democratic orators could not convince their audiences that labor is not more generously remunerated here than in any other portion of the globe, nor that European competition in this country means aught but a reduction of the wages of our own artisans to the foreign standard. Explain as they might by percentages and by comparison Democratic newspapers could not allay the apprehension and anxiety with which the North views tariff modification and revenue legislation at the hands of those in the South, who firmly believe in free trade, though they may prudently disavow such a faith during a campaign.

The victory for protection was not won wholly and solely by Republican votes. Democratic unity in the House in support of the Mills Bill was not indicative of Democratic unity in the nation. Many life-long Democrats, sincerely attached, from conviction or interest, to the maintenance of protection, refrained from all participation in the campaign, while a not inconsiderable number foreswore old party associations and openly supported General Harrison. The personality of the candidate could not repair the breach. Popular support, regardless of the unpopularity of the platform, did not come to Mr. Cleveland's aid. "No man," says a brilliant Democratic editor who extravagantly eulogizes the President's position, "no man made the President's fight his fight." The future historian will be, as the observer of the present now is, greatly perplexed in endeavoring to find the impulse or reason which gave to the President the absolute sway that he has undoubtedly exercised over his party since his inauguration.

Nor did the factional quarrel into which the City of New York was divided defeat the President's re-election. In Brooklyn, where the party was united, the loss was far more serious; and the 105,000 votes given to General Harrison were no more, the Democratic majority in the city no less, than was conceded in advance by competent judges on either side. The insurmountable majority given to the Republican candidate north of the Harlem River made New York Republican, a result obtained by the over-mastering economic issue which reduced the Prohibition vote of 1887 at

least ten thousand, and in equal measure increased the Republican vote.

Equally fortunate was the successful party in the national contest in its mottoes and maxims. That we intend to keep "our home markets for home producers," that "we prefer Uncle Sam to John Bull," are popular and pithy condensations of the conclusions of argument. The rather amusing blunder of the British Minister, who gravely furnished to an unknown correspondent a certificate of Mr. Cleveland's character as a true friend to England, exercised little if any influence upon the campaign. It but served as cumulative proof of the oft-asserted statement that the English people were greatly interested in the election, and desired Mr. Cleveland's success. Beyond this, it was the occasion for a singularly inconsistent course of action by the Secretary of State, who gravely urged upon the President the propriety of employing the judicial power of the Government, in order that the unknown correspondent might be dragged from his obscure retreat on the Pacific coast and visited with condign punishment for venturing to write to Her Majesty's representative without the permission of the Government of the United States, while at the same time he requested the instant dismissal of the minister who was unwise enough to reply.

The Democratic party was also unlucky in its choice of a distinctive campaign badge. The antiquated and peculiar handkerchief which its venerable candidate for Vice-President is accustomed to use was raised to the dignity of a national emblem. The Republican party, by an inspiration at once seized upon the flag of the country as the distinguishing mark of its adherents. Once lost, the Democratic party never could regain this advantage, and it is to be hoped that the Republican party will never relinquish it. It is a symbol well befitting a party which proudly boasts that its policy is distinctively American, and it undoubtedly carries with it a great prestige. That flag stimulates patriotism and arouses the enthusiasm alike of the older men who fought for the maintenance of all its stars, and of the younger men who give devout thanks that all its stars were maintained. Under its folds the Republican party of 1888 marched forward to a triumph which, if wisely used, will lead to still more important triumphs in the years to come.

WALKER BLAINE.